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Words Are CATegorical™

How Much Can a Bare Bear Bear?



What Are Homonyms and Homophones?

by Brian P. Cleary

illustrated by Brian Gable

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How Much Can a Bare Bear Bear?



What Are Homonyms and Homophones?



To my sister Mary,
who was merry on the day
she was to marry
—B.P.C.

Homonyms:

Two or more words that
are pronounced the same
and spelled the same but
have different meanings

Homophones:

Two or more words that
are pronounced the same
but have different spellings
and different meanings





How Much Can a Bare Bear Bear?

What Are Homonyms and Homophones?

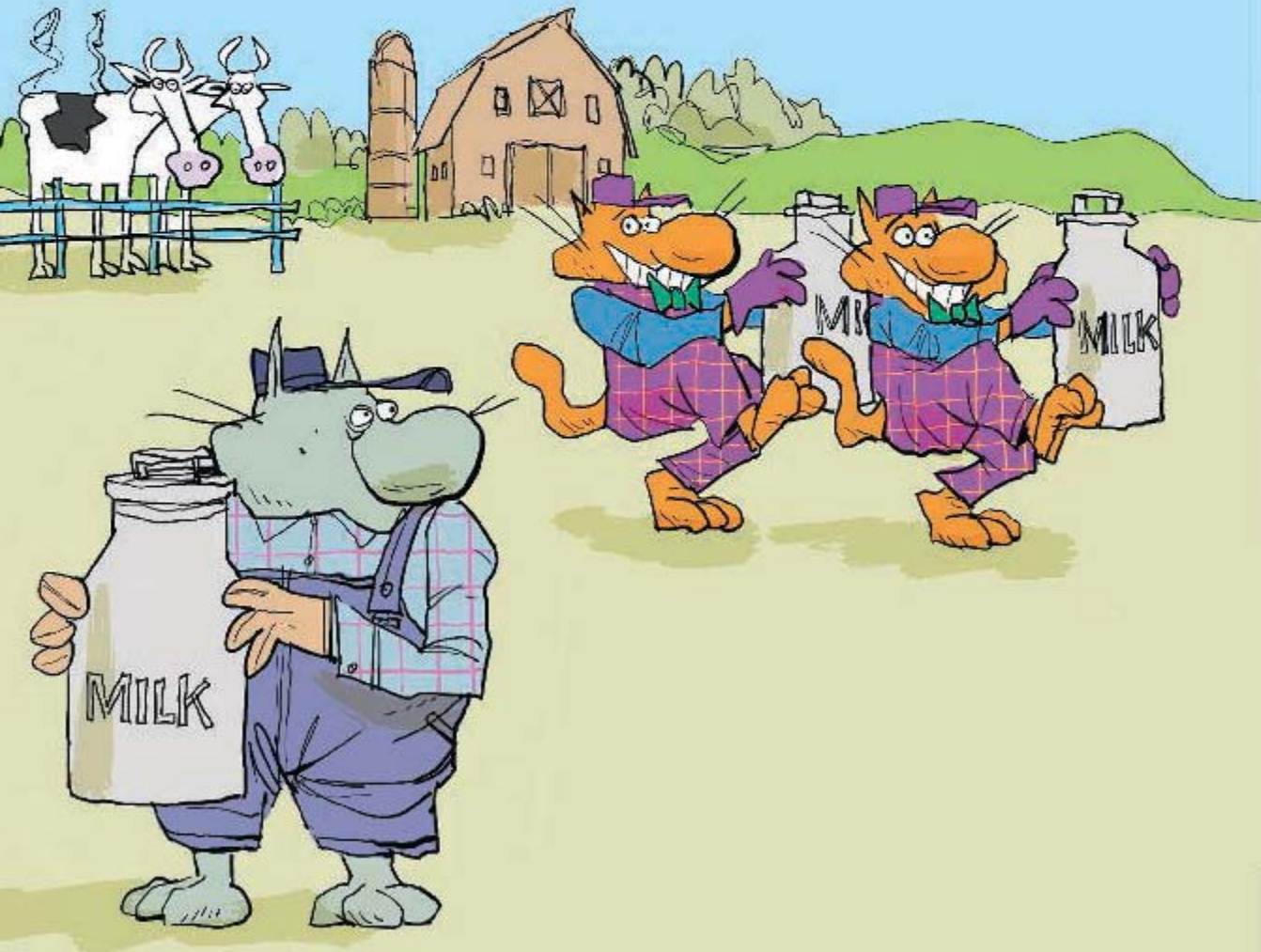
by Brian P. Cleary

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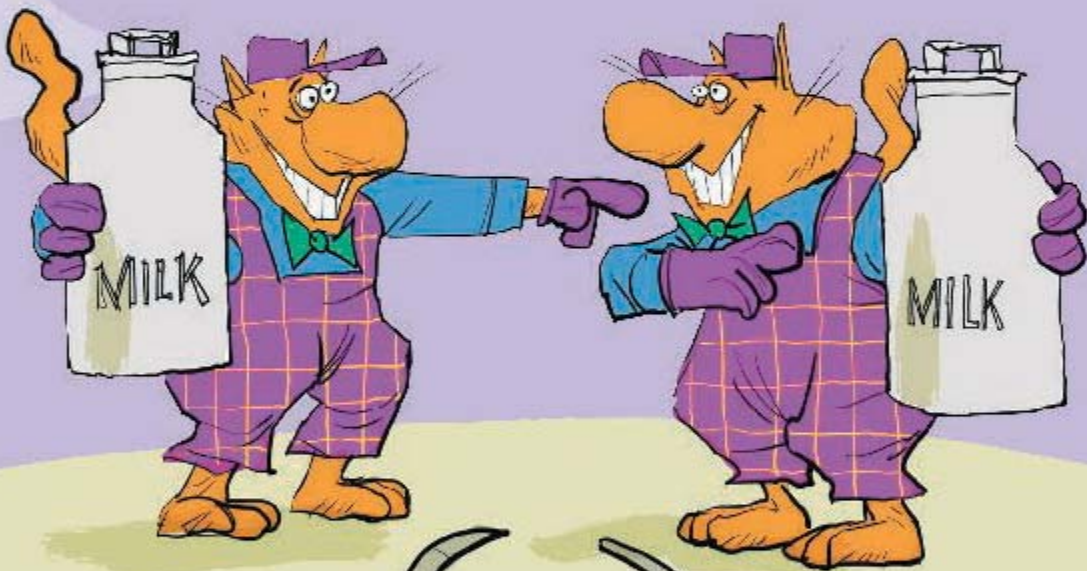
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Homonyms

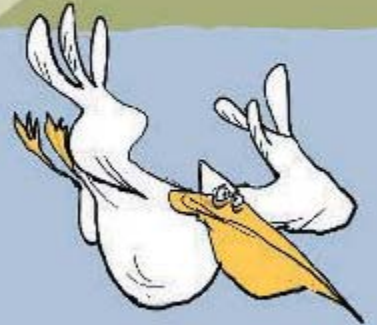
are words that sound
and also look alike.



But they have
different meanings, as in
"Can you pass that can, Mike?"



or "May I sail with you in May
and coast all along the coast?"



These words are a blast
if you say them quite fast,

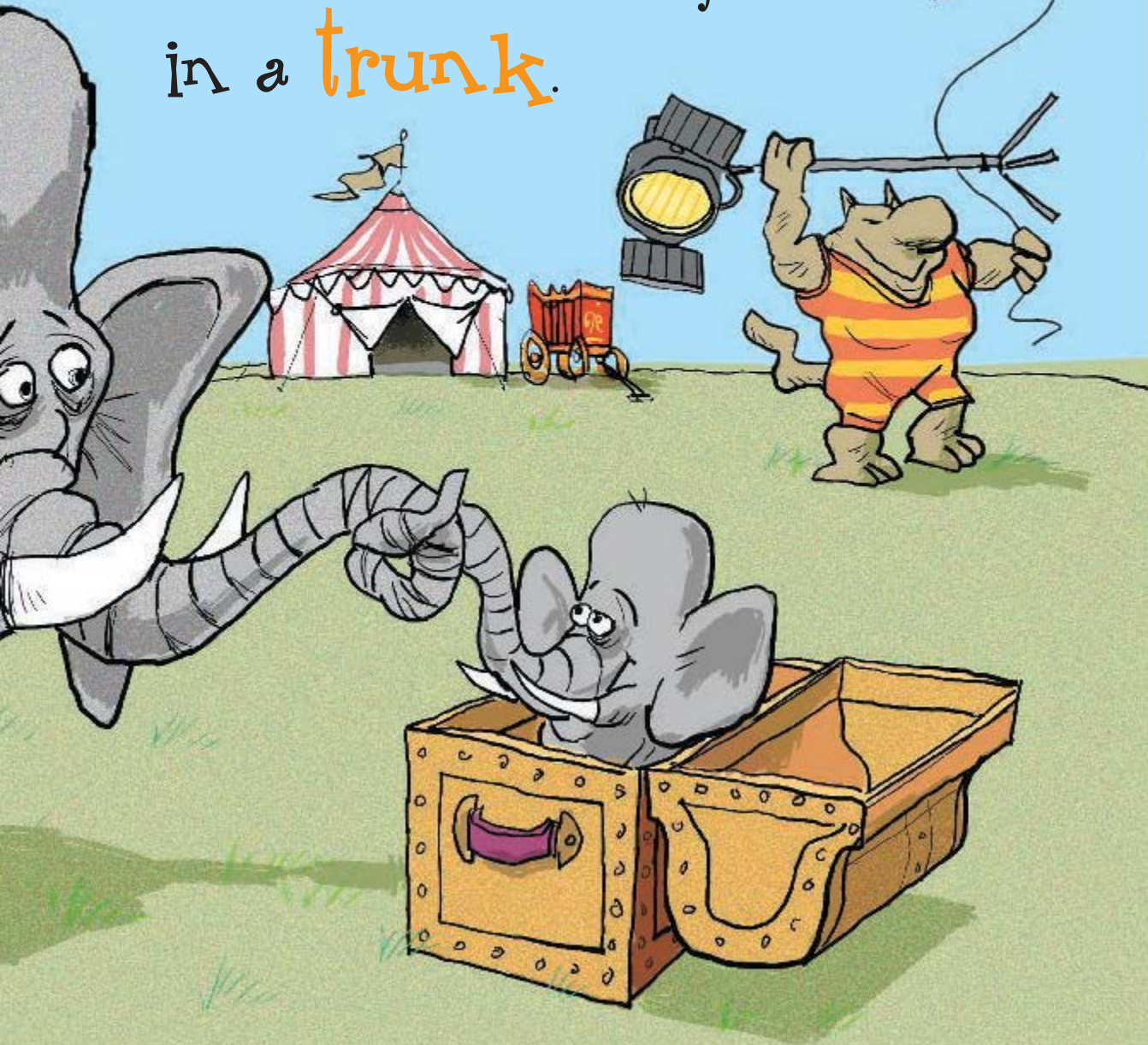
like

"Why don't we *toast*
with some *toast*?"



A **light** may be **light**,
like a small paper kite.

A **trunk** can be found
in a **trunk**.



An inchworm or snail could **scale** a **scale**.



A **lean** cat could
lean on a skunk.



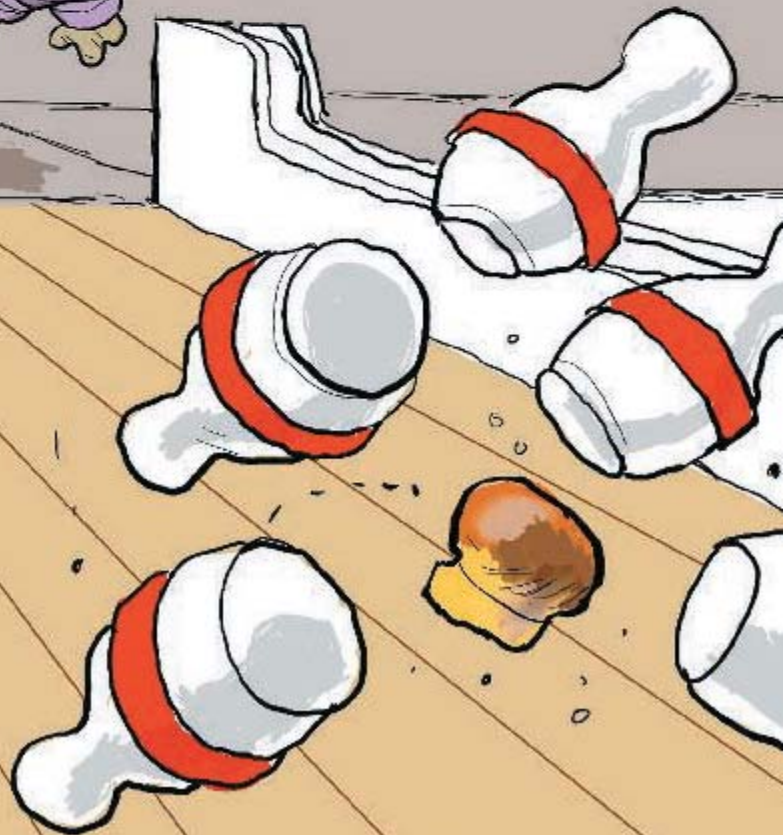
But **punch** cannot **punch**,
and at
breakfast
or lunch,



Your **jam** cannot **jam**
on a trumpet.



A bowl cannot bowl,
but a rōll
might just rōll
if it's not
made as flat
as a crumpet.



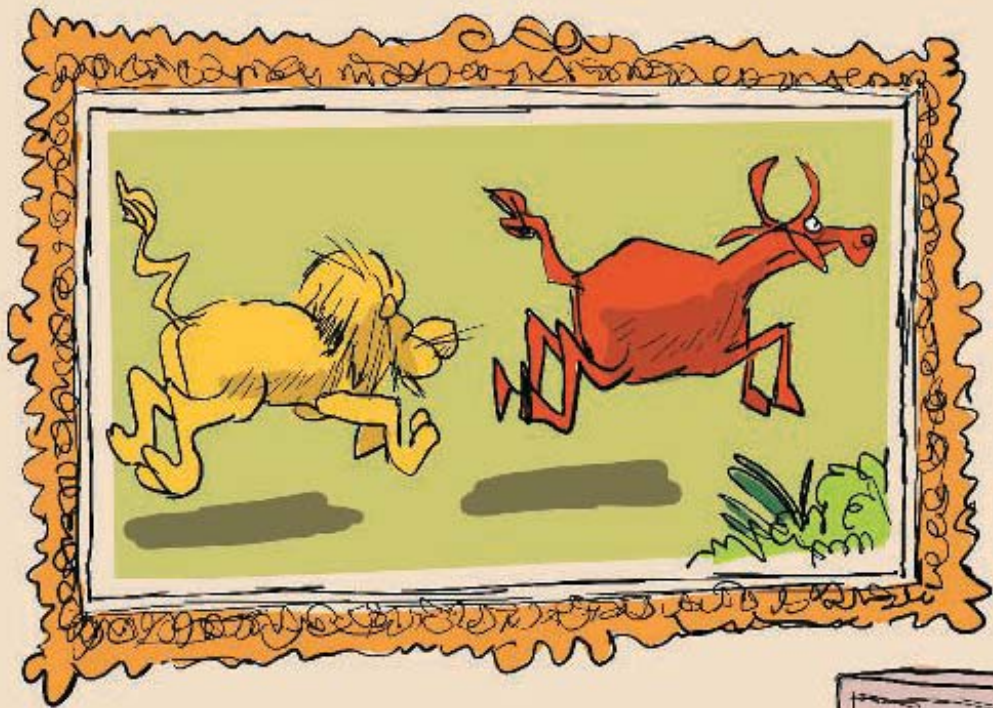
Now, some words sound identical
but are spelled in different ways.

These words are known as
homophones.

like
praise



and preys



and prays.



Though homophones
have matching sounds,
their meanings aren't
the same.





And **there** isn't any question,
they're as fun as any game.

A bee can be.



A flea can flee.



A burro
can burrow
a hole.

A **horse** can get **hoarse**
from talking, of course.

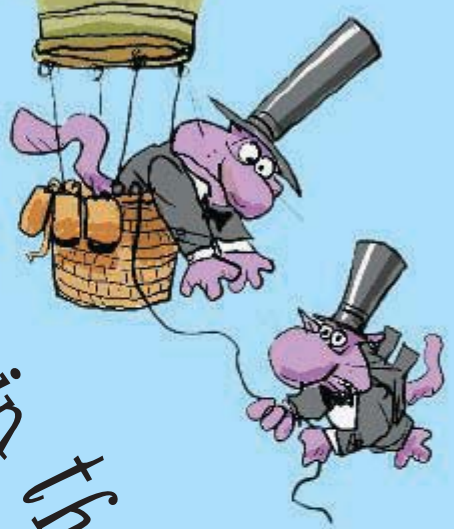
A **ewe**
could take **you**
on a stroll.



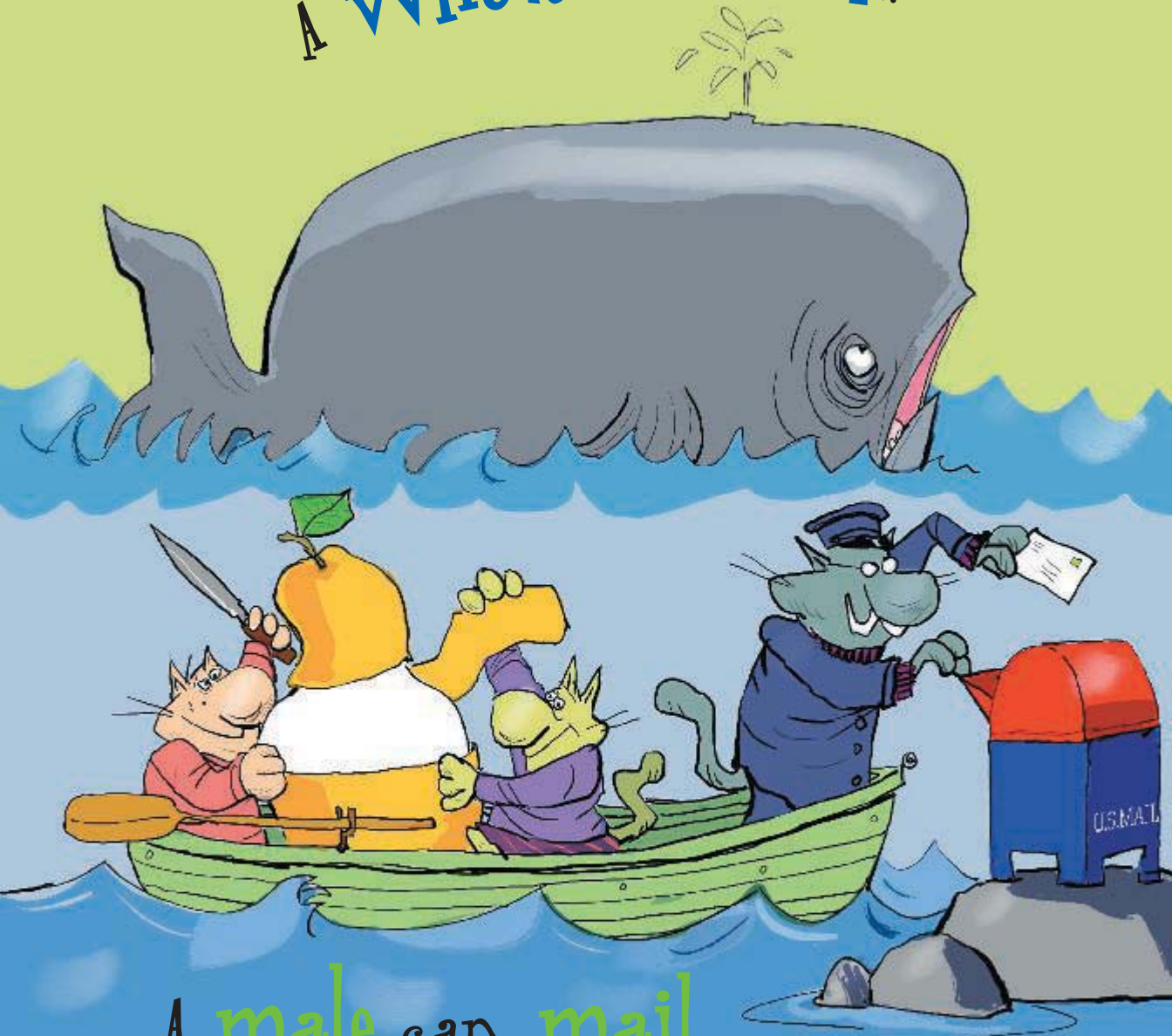
A fowl can be foul.

A toad can be towed.

An heir mustn't err in the air.



A whale can wail.

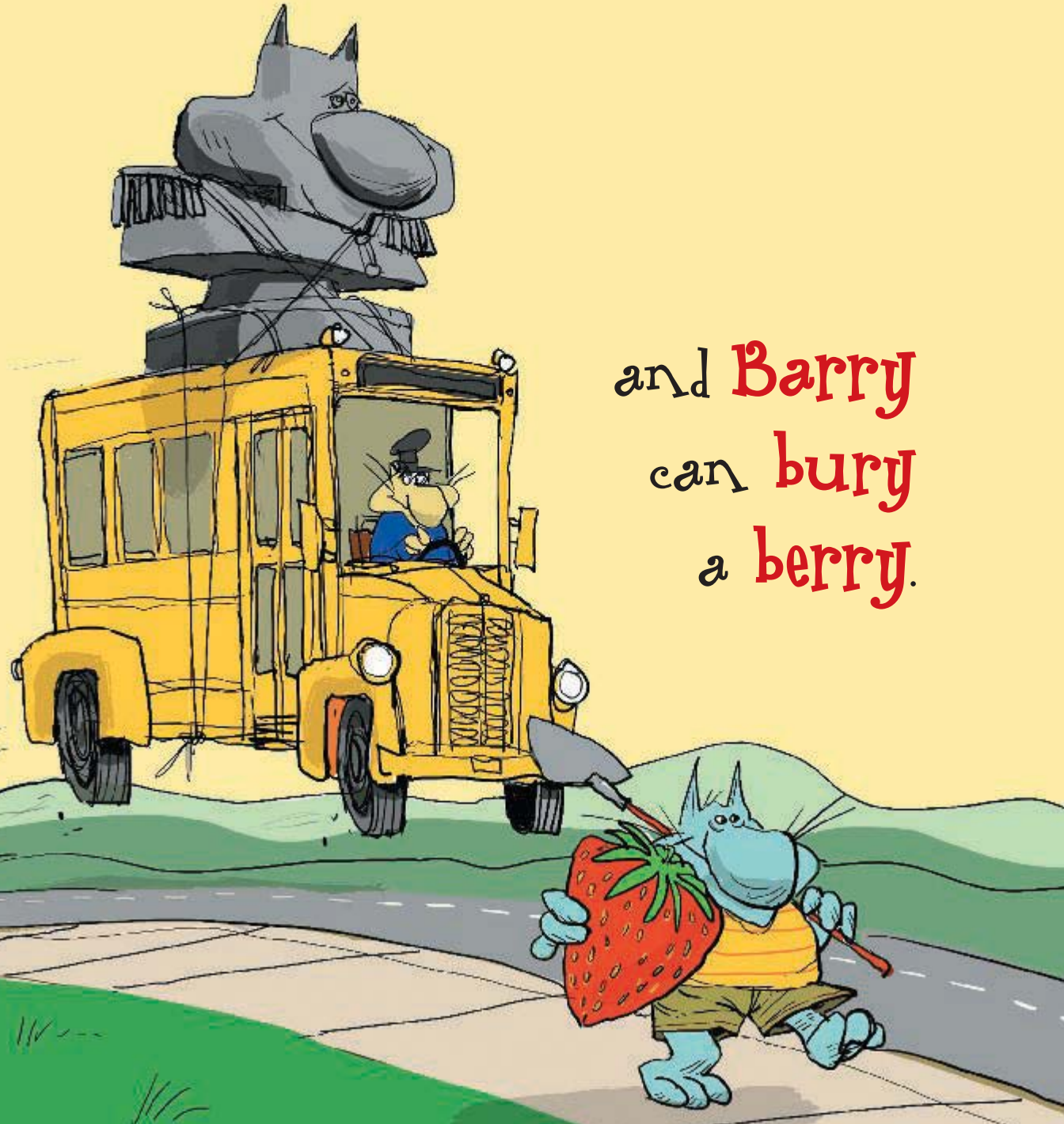


A male can mail.

A pair might just
pare a big pear.

A **bust** can be **bused**
by a driver you trust,

and **Barry**
can **bury**
a **berry**.



A **band** could be **banned**
if they get out of hand,



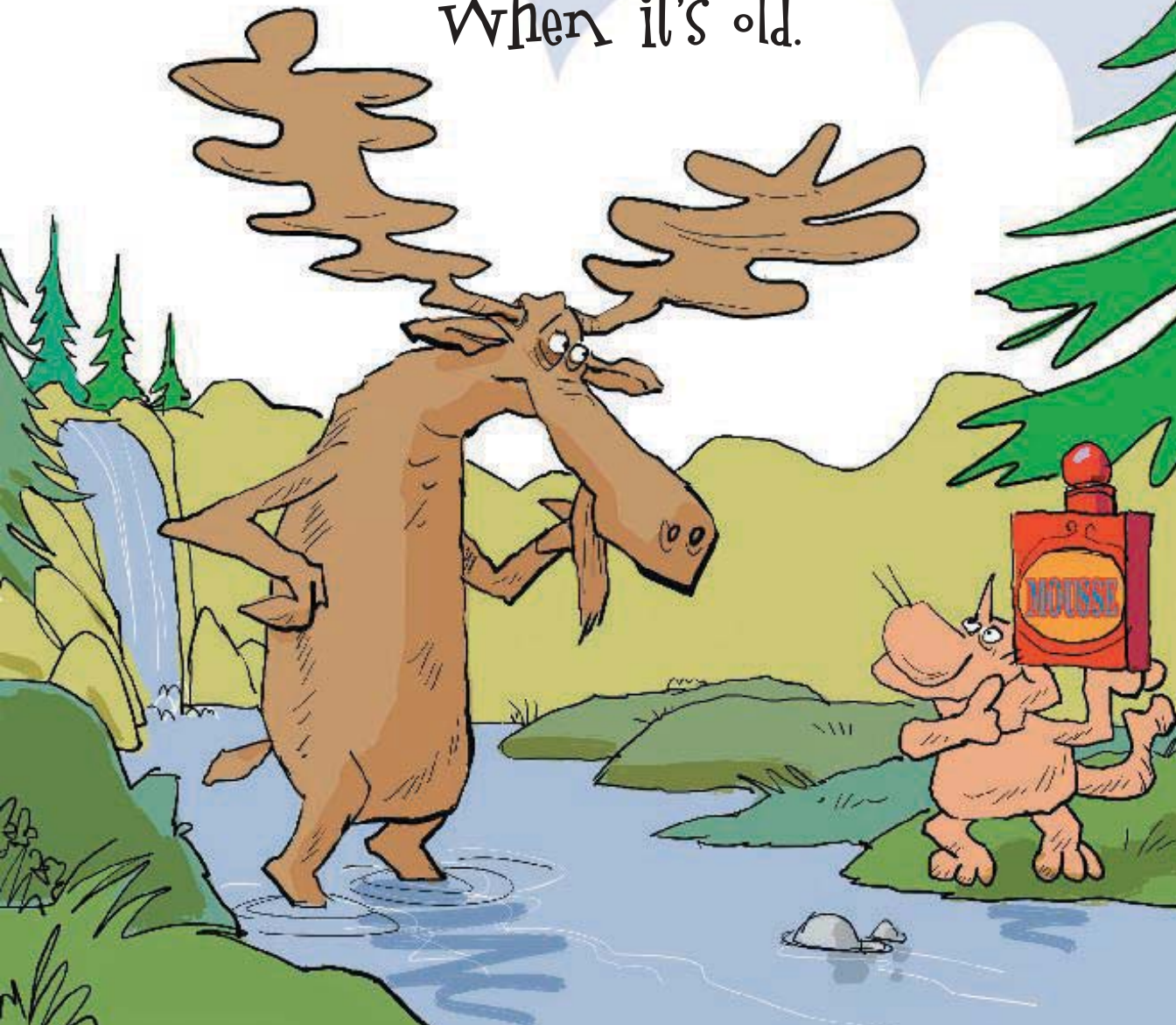
and **Mary** (who's **merry**)
can **marry**.

But the **Sea** cannot **See**,
and it's clear as can be
that

& **ball** will not **bawl** when it's rolled.



A **m^{oo}se** has no use
for a bottle of **m^{ou}sse**,
and a **creek** doesn't **creak**
when it's old.

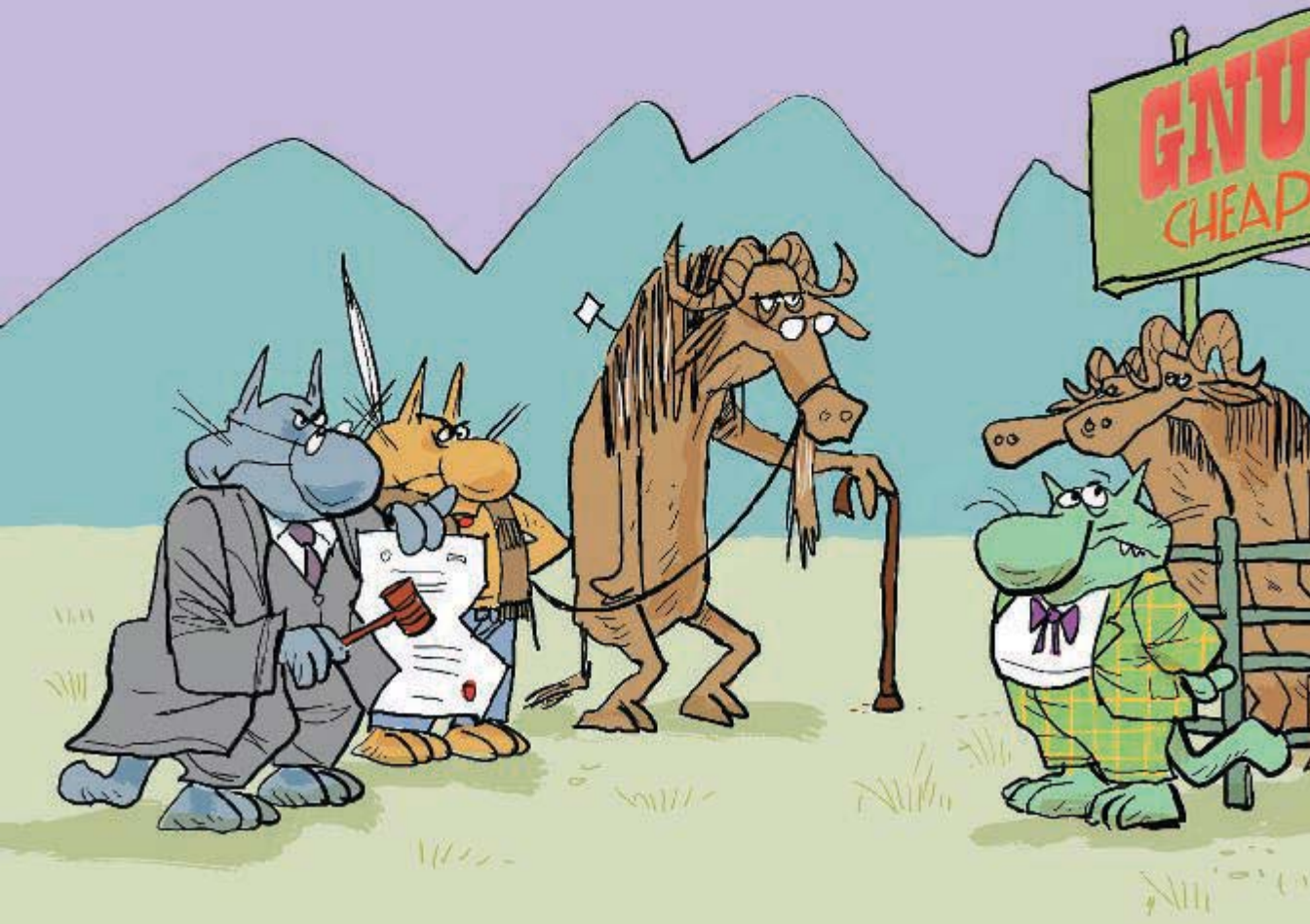




But a **bear**
should be **bare**,

and it
wouldn't be rare
if **wood would**
be kept in a shed.

A Sioux
might not sue
if he knew
that the gnu that he bought
wasn't new like you said.



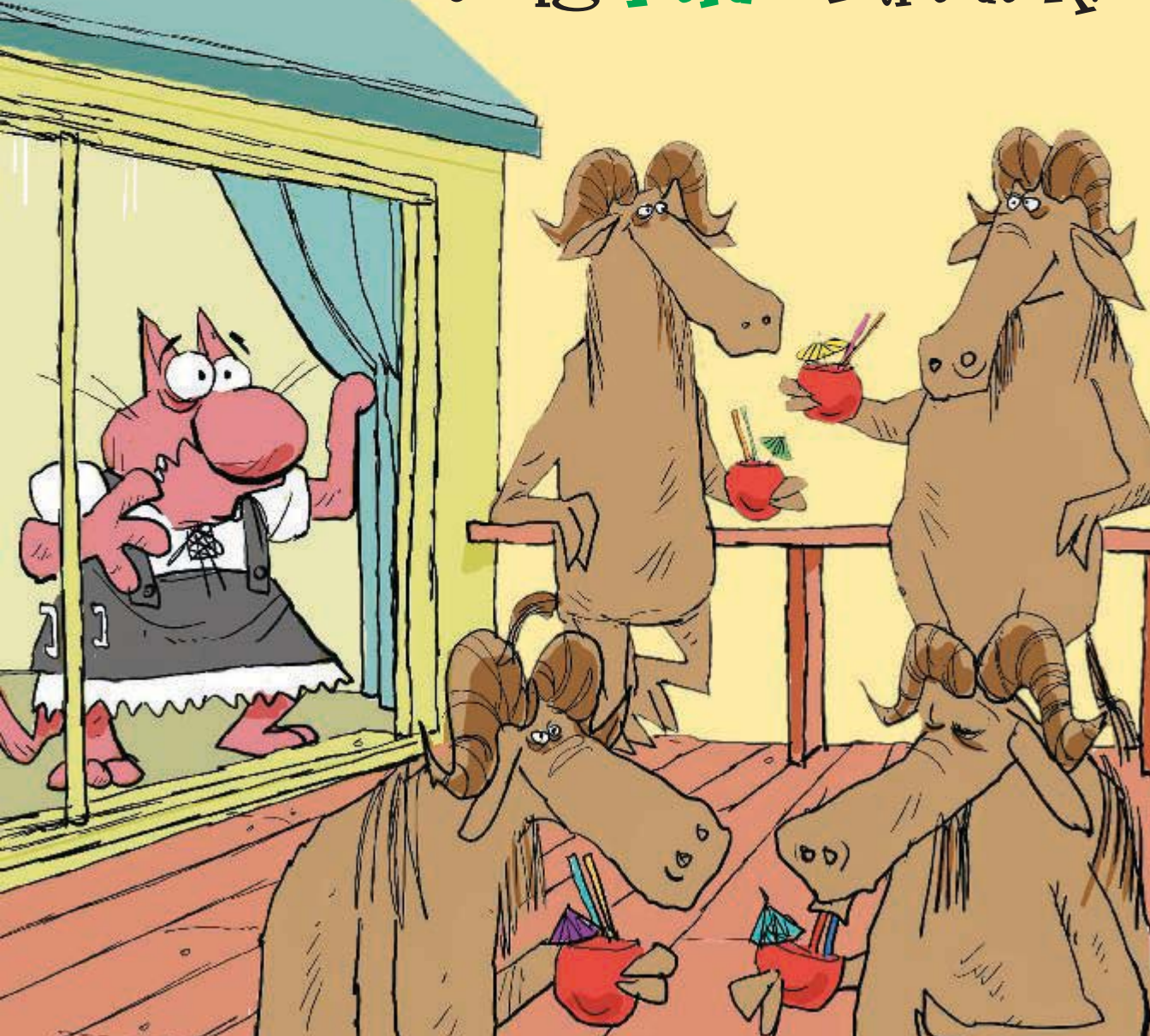
My **niece** could see **Grease**
both in **Greece** and in **Nice**.



A **Czech** could be
writing a
check.

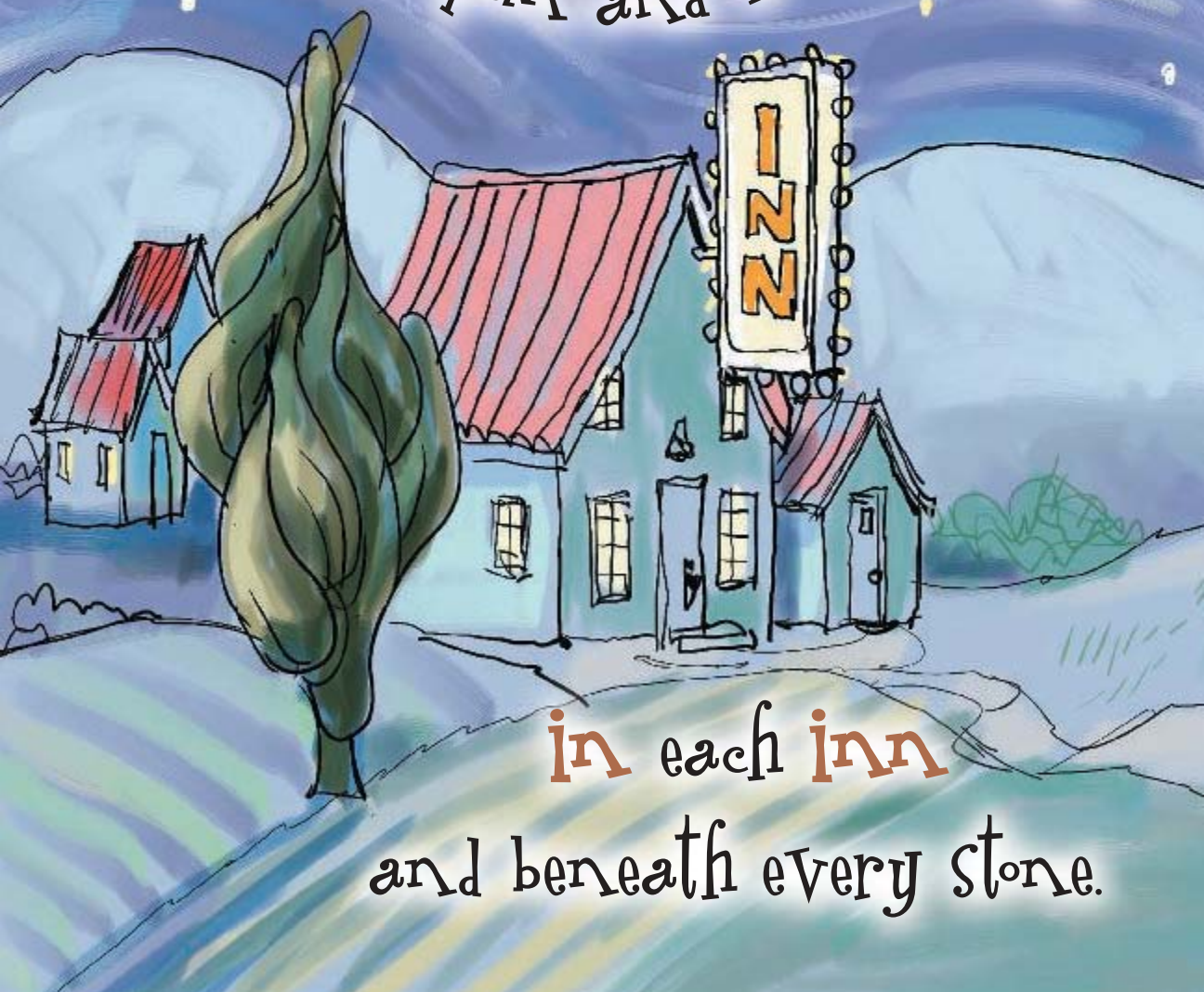


A **maid** could be **made**
to be very afraid
when she **heard**
a big **herd** on the deck.



You could search the whole **World**

while it spun and it **whirled**



in each **inn**
and beneath every stone.

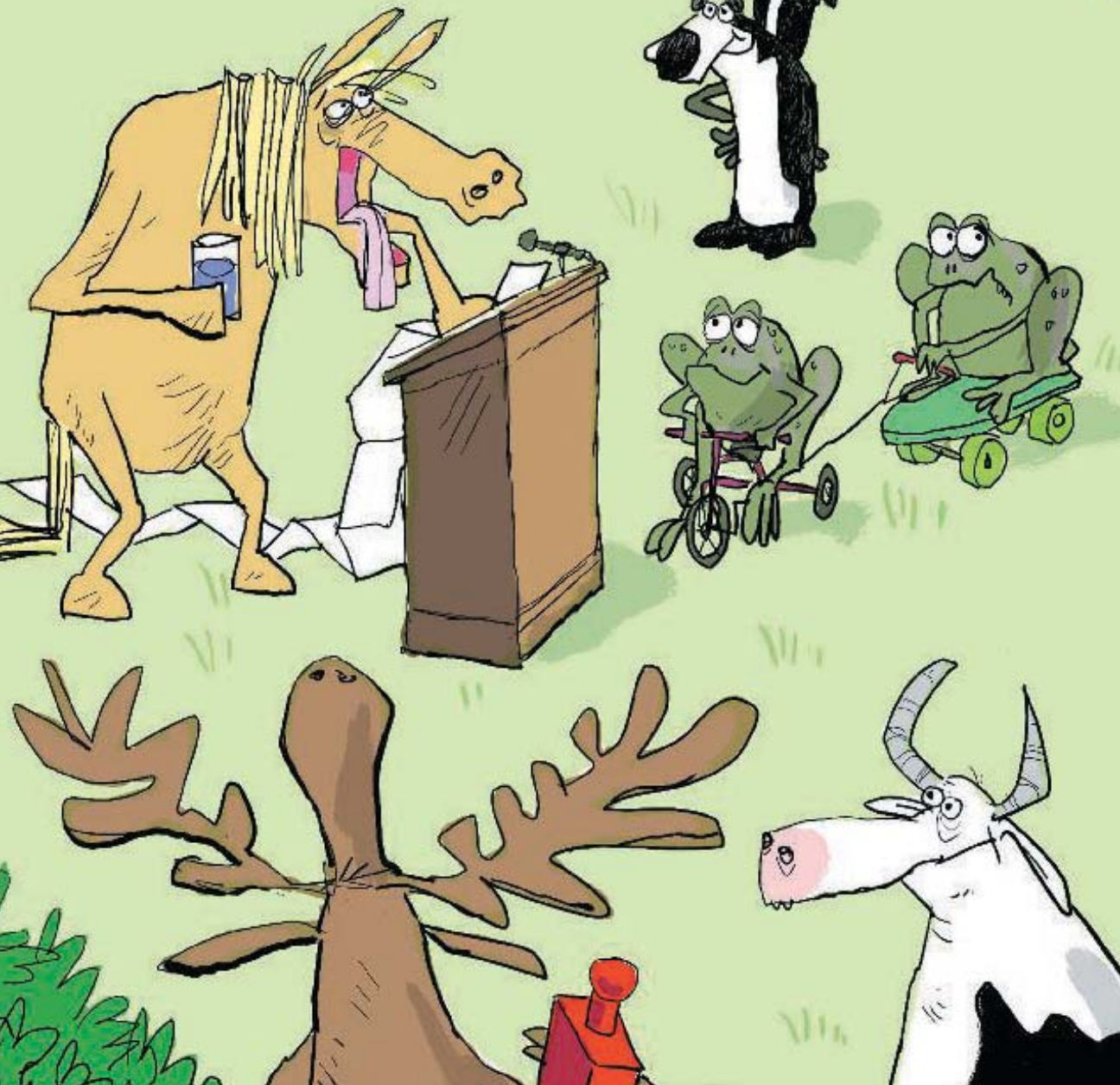
And you'd find no more pleasures
than these great verbal treasures—

the homonym
and homophone!



So, what are homonyms
and homophones?

Do you know?





ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

BRIAN P. CLEARY is the author of the **Words Are Categorical™** series, including A Mink, a Fink, a Skating Rink: What Is a Noun? and Hairy, Scary, Ordinary: What Is an Adjective?, and of Rainbow Soup: Adventures in Poetry. He lives in Cleveland, Ohio.

BRIAN GABLE is the illustrator of Under, Over, By the Clover: What Is a Preposition?, Pitch and Throw, Grasp and Know: What Is a Synonym?, and the Make Me Laugh joke books. He lives in Toronto, Ontario, with his wife and two children.

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